

Kid's KOrner

Look! A Llama In The House

BY LOU ANN GOOD

Visit the home of David and Flo Harnish in Ephrata and you might come face to face with a llama in the house.

Adam isn't a baby llama; he's tall, white, beautiful and friendly. So friendly, in fact, that he greets visitors with a kiss.

When he struts around the kitchen, his padded feet sound like he's wearing slippers against the hard-

wood floor. Actually Adam prefers to be outdoors where he can graze on the lawn.

The Harnishes have 12 llamas, three peacocks and a flock of guineas on their Log Cabin farm.

Two weeks ago a baby llama weighing 30 pounds was born on the Log Cabin farm. Since the mother's name is Diamond and the father's name is Black Diamond, the new baby was named Diamond

Boy.

At first, the 30-pound baby didn't seem to be getting enough milk so the Harnishes fed him milk through the tube in addition to his mother's milk. He gained 10 pounds. David is a doctor so he finds it easy to feed the baby with a tube.

Diamond Boy is a lively, healthy boy who doesn't act like a baby. He kicks up his heels and runs across the lawn. He behaves well and does not disappear from his mother's watchful eye.

Diamond Boy, like the rest of the herd, often communicates by making a soft humming noise. In Peru, where llamas are many, the people refer to the llamas humming as praying.

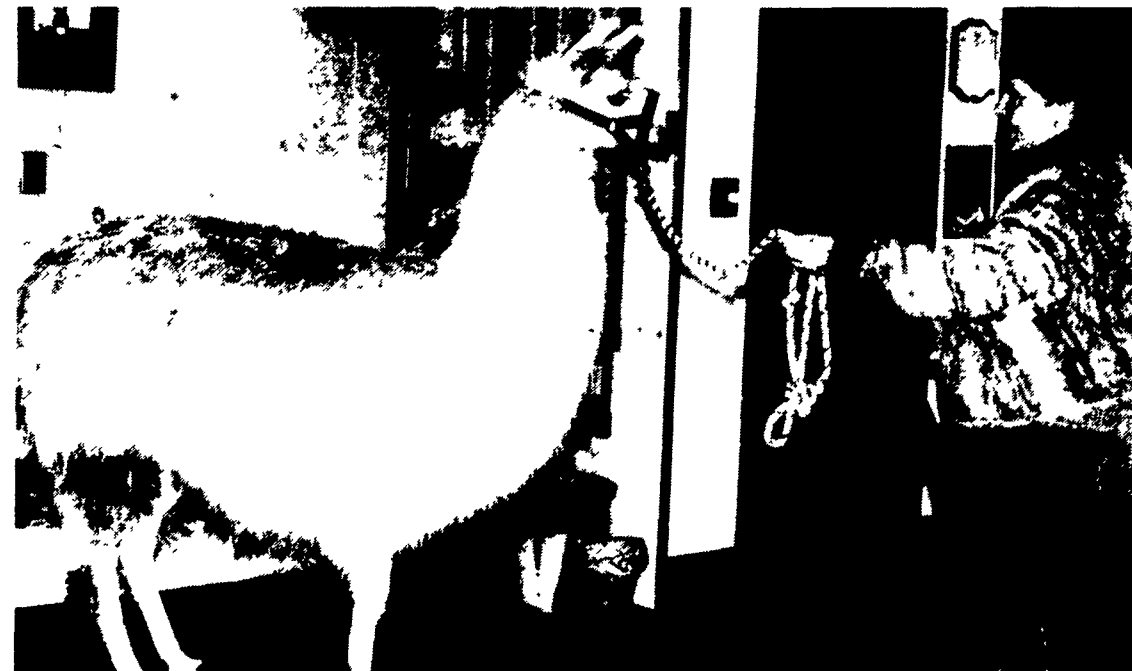
The other female llamas on the farm like Diamond Boy, but the male llamas already view him as competition. Male llamas like to claim their own territory. Although llamas are normally friendly, the males will spit at each other so they are usually penned separately.



Adam patters around the Harnishes kitchen. Despite his size, he doesn't knock things over and he doesn't eat things he shouldn't. He is a well-behaved pet. Ask your mother if you can have a pet llama in your home.



These peacocks wander around the Log Cabin Llama grounds and live quite compatibly with the 12 llamas that the Harnishes own.



This elegant white llama named Adam behaves in a gentlemanly manner when he visits David and Flo Harnish inside their home in Ephrata.



Diamond Boy gives Flo Harnish of Log Cabin Llamas a smooch on the nose.

The females are friendly to each other. But there is a definite pecking order in the herd—that means some always want to be the leaders or the bosses. They may try to gobble all the food and not share with the others.

Mostly llamas are friendly, especially to people.

Llamas can be taught to pull carts.

"I have a cart, but I didn't find time to hitch up one," Flo explained.

When she does hitch one to a cart, Flo expects the llama will do a good job of pulling the cart for llamas are quick learners. It is not uncommon for llamas to learn a skill after trying only one to five times.

They have a docile nature, a willingness to learn and to please, and they are very intelligent.

Flo said that their 12 llamas have distinct personalities. For example, Marietta is tall, very proud and skittish. Hy Jinks has raggedy wool and likes to jump fences. Lanaige is all white, placid and calm.

Llamas usually live 15 to 20 years and weigh between 250 to 500 pounds.

They do not eat much food and they do not require much care. They are much cheaper to feed than most livestock. Formerly the Harnishes fed their llamas horse feed, but now Agway sells pellets

just for llamas.

Llamas rarely get sick. The Log Cabin llamas have never been sick, but they are treated to prevent white muscle disease, meningitis, and are dewormed.

Llamas are very trendy now. They are also rather expensive. A female usually costs between nine and \$12,000; a good male between \$15,000 to \$20,000. But an ordinary male can sometimes be purchased from \$1,000 to \$3,000.

Although llamas are expensive, you can make money on them if they bred properly and have offspring with good posture, lots of wool on their legs and ears with a very wooly coat. Some llamas have straight hair; others a guard hair that covers fine under hair, which is most preferred.

Some people use them as watch dogs for their sheep herds. Because they are curious, they will run toward a coyote and spook him. This protects the herd.

The Harnishes like many other people find the llamas are stress relievers. They like to feed them then sit back and watch them for hours.

"It's so peaceful," Flo said. "Llamas are so interesting to watch."

If your mother doesn't allow you to have one in the house, try to visit someone who has one. Then your mother will surely want one—llamas are so lovable.



Some of the llamas become too warm in their fuzzy coats so the Harnishes give them a hair cut. Then their wool is spun and knitted into sweaters. Flo Harnish is wearing one of the sweaters knitted from the wool of her llamas. The yarn is soft, silky and cozy to wear. Because the yarn was spun from the wool of a dark and a white llama, the sweater is in multi-shades of brown and natural colors.